

# Wilmington

## District News

Volume 23 • Number 1

April-May 2003

### ***Corps Lake Is New Home For Bald Eagle***

Page 3



*Wilmington District News is an unofficial publication authorized under the AR 360-1. It is published monthly by U.S. Army Engineer District, Wilmington, reproduced, and circulated through distribution to CESAW employees. Submission of articles, photos, letters, and graphic arts of interest to the general readership is encouraged. Letters to the editor are welcome. All manuscripts are subject to editing and rewriting prior to publication. Deadline for submission of copy is the eighth of each month. All photos are official U.S. Army photos unless otherwise stated. The views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Corps of Engineers or the Department of the Army. Printed circulation: 750.*

## Address mail to:

U.S. Army Engineer District,  
Wilmington  
ATTN: CESAW-PA  
P.O. Box 1890  
Wilmington, N.C. 28402-1890  
Telephone: (910) 251-4626

## Email:

Penny.Schmitt@usace.army.mil

## Commander and District Engineers:

COC Charles R. Alexander

## Chief, Public Affairs:

Penelope Schmitt

## Managing Editor:

Hank Heusinkveld  
Sherrie Storm

## Layout and Design:

Linprint Company  
Wilmington, N.C.

## Inside This Issue

Rehabilitated Juvenile Eagle Release .....	3
X-Treme Lake Levels In One Year .....	4-5
Camping With The Corps .....	6
Wilmington Water Safety Team Goes International .....	7
John H. Kerr Powerhouse To Be Renovated .....	8
Unarmed Self Defense For Rangers .....	9
John H. Kerr Hosts 14th Annual VA-NC Ecology Meet .....	10
ROCAME Jamboree .....	11
District Team Celebrates Earth Day .....	12
Team Water Safety Resuces A Wet Azalea Festival .....	12
Bring a Child to Work Day .....	13
Reaching Out .....	14
Corps Family News .....	15
Retiree News .....	15
Are You Ready for Hurricane Season? .....	16

## On the Cover:

*Sandra Justus, Blue Ridge Wildlife Onstitute, releases the rehabilitated juvenile American Bald Eagle at W Kerr Scott Lake, February 2003.*

## District Newsletter Gets New Editor

First and foremost, I know that you might be petrified by my last name. Do not be afraid. Heusinkveld is pronounced hugh-zink-feld. (Be thankful that it's not O'Heusinkveldmulliganstein) Just call me Hank. It's easier and I detest my given name of Henry.

A little about myself. I hail from Idaho. (I can assume that I'll be the only person from that state whom you'll ever meet. And please; no spud jokes. I don't grow potatoes, although I do eat potatoes with the skins on. To satisfy your curiosity about *Solanum tuberosum* go to <http://www.idahopotato.com/> ) I've spent the last 3.5 years as a contract broadcast correspondent for USACE HQ Public Affairs. My TV and radio reports about various USACE projects ranging from FUDS to environmental restoration to Partnership for Peace projects were broadcast worldwide on the American Forces Radio and TV Service (AFRTS) and to more than 700 cable access stations within the U.S. One of my assignments brought me to the Wilmington District. Penny set me up with Trudy Wilder for a report on sea turtle habitat restoration, and we took a ride on a survey vessel with Kevin Alread and Alan Friar. Prior to this adventure-filled job I worked in D.C. at Radio Free Asia and before that I spent 13 years on active duty as a print and broadcast journalist with assignments in Munich and Augsburg, Germany, the Pentagon and Okinawa, Japan. I have settled in Wilmington with my wife, Peggy and my daughter, "Hurricane" Penka.

I look forward to working with you all...I mean "y'all," and I welcome your comments as I take over production of the Wilmington District News. I hope to tell your unique stories to one another, and to sell your projects to my former colleagues at Soldiers Radio and TV for possible air on AFRTS. Stop by the office for a cup of joe if you have a story idea. And yes, the rumors are true; my coffee is bold. However, it can be used as liquid electrolysis! ;-)

— Hank Heusinkveld, Public Affairs Specialist



# Rehabilitated American Bald Eagle Makes Corps Lake New Home

A rehabilitated juvenile American Bald Eagle was successfully released back into the wild on February 20, 2003 at W. Kerr Scott Reservoir near Wilkesboro, NC.

Amid the crowd of fifty people on the chilly, overcast Saturday afternoon Sandra Justus, a member of the Blue Ridge Wildlife Institute, Inc. said a Native American prayer for the young raptor as he was set free.

The release was the final chapter in a story that began nine months previous in a family garden on Globe Mountain, when Rhonda Adams found the injured bird in June of 2002.

"I'd been working in the garden and gone down to the river to take a swim. When I came back the dogs were surrounding a very large bird in my garden," said Adams. "I knew right away I had an eagle, and he was hurt," said Adams, the mother of six grown children, in a telephone interview from her home near Blowing Rock, NC.

Adams put a wire cage over the eagle to protect him while she called for help. She and her friend Edward Amon moved the eagle to a doghouse for temporary quarters.



*Sandra Justus, Blue Ridge Wildlife Institute, holds the young eagle as the emotions of the event overcome Rhonda Adams who rescued him.*

"The wound on his wing was very dirty and had maggots in it", said Adams, "so we cleaned it up and put peroxide on it."

Worried about his survival, Adams and Amon tried to interest him in a meal. They had a catfish in the freezer, thawed it out and offered it to him. "He was so weak, he just sat there, holding that catfish in his talons," said Adams.

The Caldwell County Sheriff Department assisted Adams in finding the Blue Ridge Wildlife Institute, a non-profit organization dedicated to wildlife rehabilitation, environmental education, and research.

Sandra Justus, an environmental educator with BRWI, transported the young eagle to the Carolina Raptor Center in Hickory, NC. He was suffering from blood loss and dehydration due to a broken right wing. While there the bird underwent surgery and treatment from the volunteer staff. He was fed a diet of trout and rats, vitamin and calcium supplements, and exercised in a flight cage daily. The rehabilitation took eight months.

Terry Ramsey, Operations Manager at W. Kerr Scott Lake, was thrilled to be able to provide the lake as a release site for the eagle. "The US Army Corps of Engineers takes great pride in the fact that Scott Lake was chosen as the release site," he said. "The Corps-managed federal land surrounding the lake provided additional protection for the young bird while he become acclimated to the wild."

The rehabilitation team named the eagle from the Cherokee lan-



*One last close-up before flight; the end of an 8-month rehabilitation marks beginning of a new life. American Bald Eagles can live 30 years in the wild.*

guage of Tsalagi meaning "Eagle-Ruler-Chief-of-Peace".

Rhonda Adams was there that day, too. "I knew in my heart that bird was going to fly again," she said. "When he was set free on that first flight I cried like a baby."

The day was emotional for everyone present for the release that day. "This eagle had to fight for his life," said Ramsey, "much the same way that all eagles have fought back from being endangered species."

To learn more about the Blue Ridge Wildlife Institute, visit their website at [www.wildcarebr.org/](http://www.wildcarebr.org/). For the Carolina Raptor Center, go to <http://www.birdsofprey.org/>.

Contacts for reporting injured Birds of Prey: In North Carolina call the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission Enforcement Division at 1-919-733-7191. They will find a licensed wildlife rehabilitator near you.

– Sherrie Storm, Park Ranger

## X-Treme Lake Levels In One Year

The April showers brought more flooding than flowers this year as above average rainfalls pushed back the drought and swelled regional reservoirs and rivers.

The US Army Corps of Engineers, Wilmington District manages five lakes and dams in Virginia and North Carolina. One of the purposes of these dams is flood control, so this spring's high lake elevations are a normal part of their operations.

The lakes include John H. Kerr (Buggs Island) Reservoir on the Virginia-North Carolina line and Philpott, near Martinsville, Virginia, both on the Roanoke River system; W. Kerr Scott near Wilkesboro, North Carolina on the Yadkin-PeeDee system; Falls Lake, near Raleigh and Wake Forest, North Carolina, on the Neuse River; and B. Everett Jordan Lake, near Sanford, North Carolina, on the Cape Fear River.

"In Spring 2002 we had drought contingency plans laid out in two states, with weekly meetings and conference calls among all the stakeholders," said Terry Brown, Water Control Manager for the District. "This Spring, we are looking at all five of our lake projects in some capacity of flood storage," said Brown.

Brown explained that the above average rainfall throughout the watersheds in Virginia and North Carolina raised the lake levels very quickly.

"When you look at the recent rainfall

history at Kerr, for instance, up until October of 02 we had 16 straight months of well-below average precipitation", Brown said. "After October of last year the next 6 out of the 7 months had much greater than average. In fact, the Kerr watershed received 32.5 inches of rain when normal is about 23 inches for that period."

The result for the public planning to come to vacation at the many recreation facilities at all five reservoirs was that most campsites and boat ramps were under water. Every lake had parks that were partly or totally shut down at the opening of the recreation season.

"We have gone from 10 feet below the guide curve (desired lake level) during last summer's drought to 16 feet above it on April 15th," said Dianne Batson, Operations Manager of John H. Kerr Reservoir. "That's just how the lake does its job, whether that is conserving water or keeping floods from overwhelming the lower Roanoke River basin," she explained.

At Philpott Lake the levels have suffered from the past 53 months of continuous below average inflow. Operations Manager Carl Smith is thankful to have the lake back to normal. "We went almost five years without the lake even getting near its guide curve level. So now the rains have given us a bit of a high water situation, but not as much as Kerr's or our sister lakes in North Carolina."

Philpott closed only two boat ramps temporarily due to the high water.

At W. Kerr Scott, the season opened with most boat ramps closed and the marina shut down. Operations Manager Terry Ramsey said, "the high water did not affect our camping areas, but it was really dangerous to be out on the lake due to floating debris."

North Carolina's spring rains brought closure to all Falls and Jordan Lake recreation areas, managed by the North Carolina State Parks.

"Jordan set an all time record for high water, ahead of the record set following Hurricane Fran," said Assistant Operations Manager Ralph "Duck" Duckson. According to Duckson, at 0700 on 15 April 2003, the level crested at 233.81 feet mean sea level. The previous record was 233.59 feet MSL.

While the Corps operates no campgrounds and only one boat ramp on the two lakes, Operations Manager Steve Brown was concerned about boaters, high water, and hazards.

"When lake levels go up," said Steve, "water covers over picnic tables, concrete and metal posts, shelters, and dead snags. There is also danger from floating debris."

With flooding comes a huge amount of coordination and rescheduling. Customers with reservations through the National Recreation Reservation Service must be notified and refunded their fees; park attendant contracts



*4th of July 2002 brought crowds to hear bluegrass music in the 500 seat amphitheater at Kerr.*



*April 2003 – it will be a while before any bands play at North Bend Park. No equipment is ever left in the building due to flood potential.*

have to be modified; cleaning service contracts are affected; marina operators are unable to sell gasoline, or may become completely inaccessible; boat ramps are unusable so fishing tournaments have to be rescheduled, affecting as many as 500 people at a time; and more.

"The coordination that goes into the natural resources and recreation sides of the house is only part of the story," said Terry Brown. "The hydropower and flood control responsibilities really begin when a flood is little more than a predicted threat."

Brown went on to explain that the Corps has to maintain a delicate balance between the incoming flows from rainfall and the flows going out of the dams downstream.

"At Kerr, South Atlantic Division's second largest dam and hydroplane, the flood control release point is at Roanoke Rapids Dam," explained Brown. "It can release 18,500 cubic feet per second through the turbines, so anything above that is water that cannot be used to generate power. Kerr's water control plan calls for 35,000 cfs to be released downstream when the levels reach 315 feet MSL, so that is lost revenue in terms of sales to South Eastern Power Administration."

According to Brown, in flood events it is crucial that the water control plan at Kerr is followed to the letter. A high water event requires one to

two days of notification and coordination with downstream stakeholders, which has resulted in better communication and understanding.

"Our hydropower folks at Kerr, Philpott, and throughout the District do a tremendous job keeping the flood control operations running smoothly," said Brown.

The early part of this year's recreation season will surely bring with it some hard work cleaning up the debris and other remains of the April flooding.

From past experience with spring floods, all the lake managers are aware of the cleanup efforts that will be required when the water recedes. "Everything that sat under water will be covered with a layer of mud and silt, logs, and layers of vegetative debris," said Kerr's Assistant Operations Manager of Parks Robert Dennis. "All the lakes will also have to cleanup human debris like Styrofoam and plastic containers, propane tanks, tires, anything that floats. We had one flood that required us to go out, drag in and bury a dead cow, another where a truck camper washed downstream into the lake. Retrieval of floating hazards is another job duty that most people are unaware the Corps does."

The recent flooding has caused many to ask, "Is the drought over?" According to Terry Brown, we are in a

"monitor and wait" status.

"We have the Water Management Committee in place and continuing to meet monthly to discuss water issues. What began as a response to manage our water resources during the extreme drought that the 2 states experienced has turned into an outstanding partnership to manage the resource year around."

The Water Management Committee is comprised of Federal, state, and local governments, industrial and corporate concerns, private citizens, river basin organizations, marina operators, and elected officials. They meet monthly to discuss the water management of all five of the reservoirs, their rivers, and watersheds.

The photographs tell a story of extremes...low water and high water. Both conditions can be unsafe and are surely an inconvenience to recreation plans. The important thing to remember is...weather is still uncontrolled by man. Lack of rain can bring droughts and too much rain brings floods.

For detailed lake levels during the flood, please visit the website at <http://epec.saw.usace.army.mil/>.

The US Army Corps of Engineers manages water at both extremes nature sends, aiming to provide the optimum conditions for both the environment and people.

– Sherrie Storm, Park Ranger



October 2002 – record lows during drought closed ramps due to lack of water. Palmer Point, shown here, is closed again for too much water.

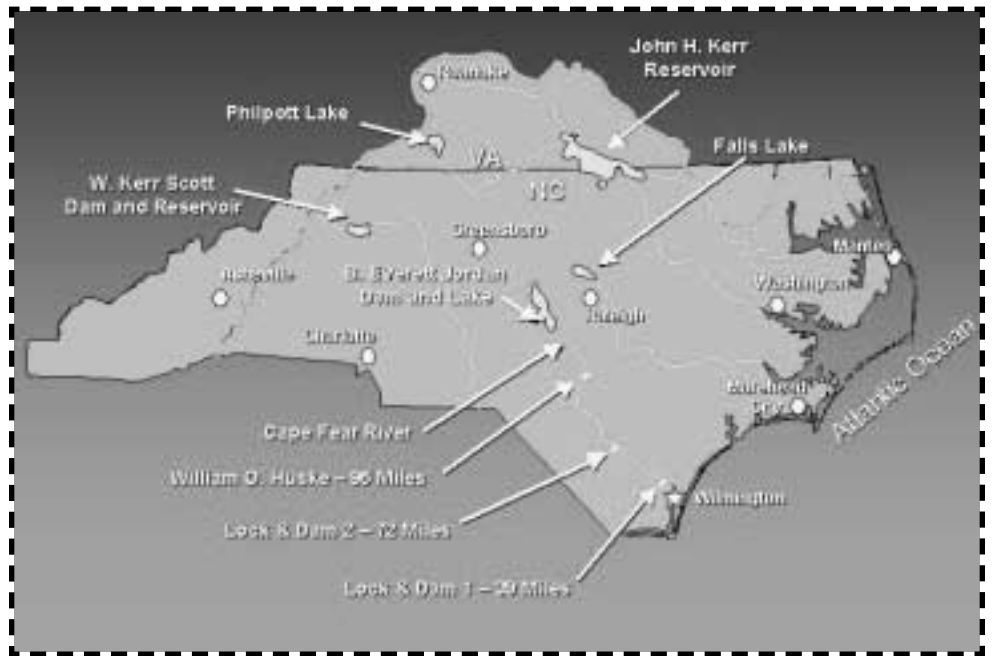


April 2003 – at 300 ft. MSL the bulletin board sits 50 feet from the top of the launch ramp. Here at Longwood, the foreground is the underwater parking lot.

# Did You Know...

## **The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, Wilmington District is accountable for:**

- 8.5 million acres of waters and wetlands
- 5 lakes and dams in Virginia and North Carolina with annual visitation of over 6.5 million people
- 93,000 acres of forests on public lands
- 308 miles of the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway
- 2 hydropower plants that produce 459,736,836 kilowatt hours of pollution-free electricity annually
- 19,700 acres of wildlife habitat managed for neotropical migrants, upland birds and mammals



## **Camping With The Corps**

The US Army Corps of Engineers is the nation's leading provider in outdoor recreation opportunities for the public. The Corps operates more than 2,500 recreation areas at 463 projects (mostly lakes) and leases an additional 1,800 sites to State or local park and recreation authorities or private interests. The Corps hosts 360 million visits a year at its lakes, beaches and other areas, and estimates that 25 million Americans (one in ten) visit a Corps project at least once a year.

Wilmington District is one of five districts in the Corps' South Atlantic Division. Established in 1894, Wilmington District operates and maintains the Atlantic Intercoastal Waterway, dredges ocean inlets, regulates the use of wetlands and navigable waters, operates and maintains three locks-and-dams. The Corps manages five lake projects in NC and VA, two in Virginia with hydroelectric power plants. At three of the lakes – John H. Kerr (Buggs Island), Philpott, and W. Kerr Scott – the Corps operates full service campgrounds and day use facilities. The two in North Carolina, Falls Lake and B. Everett Jordan, have campgrounds that are managed by NC State Parks. Please refer to the individual lake project listings for contact information.

All five Corps lake projects have Visitor Assistance Centers, open year around.

Falls Lake. . . . .	(919) 846-9332
B. Everett Jordan Lake . . . . .	(919) 542-4501
John H. Kerr Reservoir. . . . .	(434) 738-6143
Philpott Lake. . . . .	(276) 629-2703
W. Kerr Scott Lake . . . . .	(336) 921-3390

***Please visit these websites:***

***www.usace.army.mil and www.saw.usace.army.mil.***

## **Wilmington District Water Safety Team Presents Program At "International Boating & Water Safety Summit"**

Representatives from Wilmington District were presenters at the "International Boating and Water Safety Summit", April 14 – 17, 2003. More than 400 participants converged on Las Vegas, Nevada for the event.

Terry Ramsey, R.G. Absher, and Paula Carper presented an hour-long program called "Conducting an Aggressive and Successful Water Safety Outreach Program". The program, which included a Power Point slide presentation, focused on the accomplishments and lessons learned by the entire Wilmington District's water safety team members.

"We really had no idea that it would be as heavily attended as it was," said Terry Ramsey. "We had over 150 people crammed into a space for about 75." Ramsey said he was informed that it was the most heavily attended break-out session at the Summit.

Paula Carper, who assisted with putting the program together, was delighted with the turnout. "And the comments," said Carper. "People had nothing but great things to say about Wilmington's outreach efforts, and many of them expressed interest in implementing our ideas back at their own projects."

One of Wilmington's successes is the early spring letter mailing that Carper does to all the public schools within 100 miles of the lake projects promoting the Corps' "Safe Passage" program. Teachers can access it via the internet or they may request videos and activity books be mailed to them. Park rangers at the lakes also offer to visit the schools and present water safety programs. This idea seems to

have spread by way of a relocating teacher!

"One of the more interesting stories I heard," said Carper, "came from a park ranger from Mississippi. A teacher had moved from the Raleigh area down there and had called the Mobile District Office to ask when the water safety letters were going to go out so she could plan her spring programs." As a result, Carper said, that lake project is implementing the program.

In addition to sharing information with others at the Summit, the District Team picked up other

great ideas to incorporate into Wilmington's program.

The Summit is held annually and is a cooperative effort between the National Safe Boating Council and the National Water Safety Congress, of which the US Army Corps of Engineers is a very active member.

HOOAH! To Team Water Safety! For more information, please go to <http://watersafety.usace.army.mil/SafePassage/>.

*– By Sherrie Storm, Park Ranger*



*Terry Ramsey explains the "After Action Review Process". His program was selected a year ago for presentation at this year's Summit, based upon the success of the Wilmington District's water safety education programs.*



## John H. Kerr Powerhouse To Be Renovated

After providing hydroelectric power for 50 years, the John H. Kerr Powerhouse in Southern Virginia is scheduled for a total refurbishment that will increase power output by more than 30 percent while also featuring the latest environmental technology. The seven-unit, nearly \$47-million refurbishment was the largest hydro project tendered in the U.S. during the past year.

The powerhouse is part of the John H. Kerr Project that includes a dam, reservoir and switchyard and is located on the Roanoke River near the border of North Carolina. In addition to producing power, the project also offers wildlife resources, forest conservation and public recreational uses. Along with flood control and drought management the project provides other benefits downstream from the dam including flow regulation to maintain the river level for fish spawning.

Reservoirs are generally viewed as a three-tiered body of water. At the Kerr reservoir, the bottom or "dead storage" portion of the reservoir remains full at all times to provide minimum water pressure necessary to operate the power plant. The middle or "power storage" portion is used for the production of electrical energy and for regulation for stream flow below the dam. The top or "flood storage" portion is reserved for the storage of floodwaters and remains empty most of the time.

To generate hydroelectric power, water from the reservoir flows through the gate-controlled penstocks, rotates the turbines in the powerhouse and discharges the water through the draft tubes to the river below. The turbines are

directly connected to generators, producing electric power for transmission to two regional utilities, Dominion and Progress Energy.

### *Protecting Aquatic Life*

Following a growing trend in hydro industry, environmental improvements were a key part of the upgrade and refurbishment contract. The contractor, GE Hydro, will install a turbine aeration system to increase the dissolved oxygen (DO) content in the water being discharged from the turbines. The increased DO will benefit living organisms downstream of the power plant by increasing the amount of oxygen available in the waterway to sustain life.

Low DO levels can result in inhibited fish growth and reproductive capability. Dissolved oxygen levels vary depending on the depth and temperature of the water. The DO levels throughout a body of water drop in the hotter summer months, but generally remain within a safe range for aquatic life of five to six milligrams per liter. Hydro turbines draw water through intake valves located in the lower parts of the reservoir where DO levels can be as low as 0 to one mg per liter. This transfer of deep, low oxygen water to shallow, more oxygenated levels can cause the DO level downstream to fall below the safe range for aquatic life. The turbine aeration system to be installed at John H. Kerr will result in an increase in DO levels of three mg per liter from intake levels.

### *Turbine Refurbishments*

Under the contract GE Hydro will refurbish the turbine runner for



*Workers installing generator #3 at Kerr in 1952. Service was not interrupted during the past fifty years of service.*

unit 1, to ensure continued reliable service and maintain an output of nearly 13 megawatts. For units 2-7, new turbine runners will be installed to increase the output of each machine from approximately 33.5 megawatts to more than 45 megawatts. Once completed, the refurbishment project will increase the total powerhouse output from approximately 214 to 283 megawatts.

The project will also involve installation of seven new sets of stator coils and windings. Ratings for the existing generators are 13,333 kva for unit 1 and 35,555 kva for units 2-7. Following the refurbishment, the ratings for the other six units will increase to 52-thousand kva.

The timetable for the refurbishment calls for unit 1 to resume commercial operation by the end of 2004. Another unit will be commissioned in 2005, followed by three units in 2006 and the final two in 2007.

*— By Kate Bass  
Kate Bass is a public  
information officer for GE Hydro.*



## Unarmed Self Defense For Wilmington District Park Rangers

Forty-five park rangers from the five lake projects converged on Clarksville, Virginia's Community Center on Wednesday, March 19, 2003 for the annual Visitor Assistance Update and Unarmed Self Defense Training.

"This annual training is mandatory for all US Army Corps of Engineers park rangers," said Paula Carper, the Wilmington District Visitor Assistance Coordinator responsible for organizing the training. "It is required for all personnel wearing the Natural Resources Management (NRM) uniform, regardless of whether or not they have citation authority," continued Carper.

South Atlantic Division Corps Park Rangers are not armed, and are not authorized to carry any type of self-defensive weapons. Protection of the Rangers and their safety while on the job becomes the most important objective for the District.

"Most of us work outdoors in remote, wooded areas during day and nighttime hours," said Kevin McDaniels, Kerr's Chief Park Ranger. "We are trained to avoid dangerous situations, and to call law enforcement when we encounter criminal activities.

Sometimes, though, the situation becomes dangerous after we are already there."

The "Unarmed Self Defense" portion of the VA Update is designed to instruct the rangers how to escape in the quickest way possible should an assault on them occur.

The instructors for the USACE-PROSPECT course were Bill Jackson, Nashville District and Chris Arthur, Park Ranger from SAD Lake Sidney Lanier.

Jackson covered the lecture part of the instruction. This included the changes to the Visitor Assistance Program, physical security of dams and increased surveillance, new Homeland Security rules, verbal judo techniques, and the "eight tactical steps" involved in visitor contact communications.

In the second part of the eight-hour course, Arthur warmed up the rangers with a series of stretching and aerobic exercises. "It is important to warm up prior to any physical exertion," said Arthur. "This is especially true for rangers who have been sitting at computers all winter," he said as he laughed, referring to the

increasing numbers of emails and reports that all employees face.

The rangers then teamed up into pairs, while Bill and Chris demonstrated a variety of attacks and holds, and ways to escape from them. Each person then took turns being the "attacker" and the "victim", practicing until everyone felt comfortable with their skill levels.

The training was concluded with no major injuries except for a bit of extra soreness from the "old timers", and a warm round applause to Bill and Chris for another year's job well done for Team Wilmington.

— By Sherrie Storm, Park Ranger

*Kerr-Scott Operations Manager Terry Ramsey and Kerr Park Ranger Tyree Robertson practice self-defense moves.*



## John H. Kerr Hosts 14th Annual VA-NC Ecology Meet

It was a warm and windy day Wednesday, April 23 when 75 middle school and high school students teamed up to compete in the 14th Annual Virginia-North Carolina Ecology Meet. The Meet this year was held at the Joseph S.J. Tanner, II Environmental Education Center.

Teams of students from five schools from the six-county area surrounding Kerr Reservoir competed for trophies in eight natural resources subject areas. The students rotated to the different stations throughout the daylong event, and answered questions presented to them by the station sponsors. The teams of students were selected by their teachers, and preparation for the Meet was accomplished during the students' free time.

The natural resources management agencies around Kerr Reservoir, including the US Army Corps of Engineers, sponsor the Ecology Meet. The sponsors and their stations are AQUATICS, Virginia Cooperative Extension Service; ENDANGERED SPECIES, North Carolina State Parks; HERPETOLOGY, US Army Corps of Engineers; WILDLIFE, Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries; SOILS, USDA-NRCS and the Soil and Water Conservation Services from the surrounding lake counties; INTERPRETATION, Virginia State Parks; HYDROLOGY, US Army Corps of Engineers; FORESTRY, Virginia and North Carolina Departments of Forestry.

The Ecology Meet has been the recipient of several state and national awards, and has been praised by students, parents, and teachers as one of the finest examples of environmental education competitions in the two-state area. It is the only scholastic competition of its type in the two-state area.

"It is just marvelous to see the interest these kids take in this event every year," said Justyn Spencer, a high school biology teacher at Northern Vance High School in Henderson, NC. "This is my fourteenth year coming and the competition gets tighter and tighter each year."

Alan Clark, a game warden with the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, agreed. "We have manned our Wildlife Station every year since the first one in 1990. I have not missed a single one, and have noticed the improvement in the kids knowledge each year."

The competition is funded by the Soil and Water Conservation Districts, who donate the \$300 each year necessary to purchase the trophies. Trophies are awarded to the team placing 1st in each subject, middle and high school. Trophies also are awarded to the middle and high school teams for 1st, 2nd and 3rd places overall.

The location for the Ecology Meet rotates around Kerr Lake each year. It is at John H. Kerr's Tanner Center

for the 2003 and 2004 Meets; rotates to Occoneechee State Park for 2005-06; and to NC State Parks' Bullocksville State Park for 2007-08. This decision was made by the Ecology Meet Committee, the governing body of the Meet, to encourage maximum participation from the different states' schools.

The VA-NC Ecology Meet is a not-for-profit agency dedicated to the promotion of stewardship among middle and high school students through environmental education competition. The Ecology Meet Committee is comprised of representatives from the eight partner agencies that participate in the event.

"We decided to branch away from one agency sponsoring the event in order to keep it alive," said Sherrie Storm, coordinator of the event. "The way it is set up now, when the people who hold the jobs in the agencies leave, or budget shortfalls cause cutbacks the Ecology Meet will stay alive, regardless. We are all really proud of it."

— By Sherrie Storm, Park Ranger

*Students from Bluestone High School try to identify this snake.  
(Eastern Hognose, *Heterodon platyrhinos*)*



## District Members Assist With 2003 ROCAME Jamboree

Saturday, March 29, over 200 middle and high school students participated in the annual ROCAME Jamboree at Murray Middle School in Wilmington. District team members Tony Carter, Doug Greene, Jeff Whiting, and James Lewis assisted as volunteers.

ROCAME (Region "O" Council for the Advancement of Minorities in Engineering), established in 1979 to encourage minority youths to enter the fields of engineering, science, and technology has held annual jamborees for 24 years. Students participate in hands-on projects based on engineering principles, extemporaneous speaking, technical paper writing, and quiz bowls.

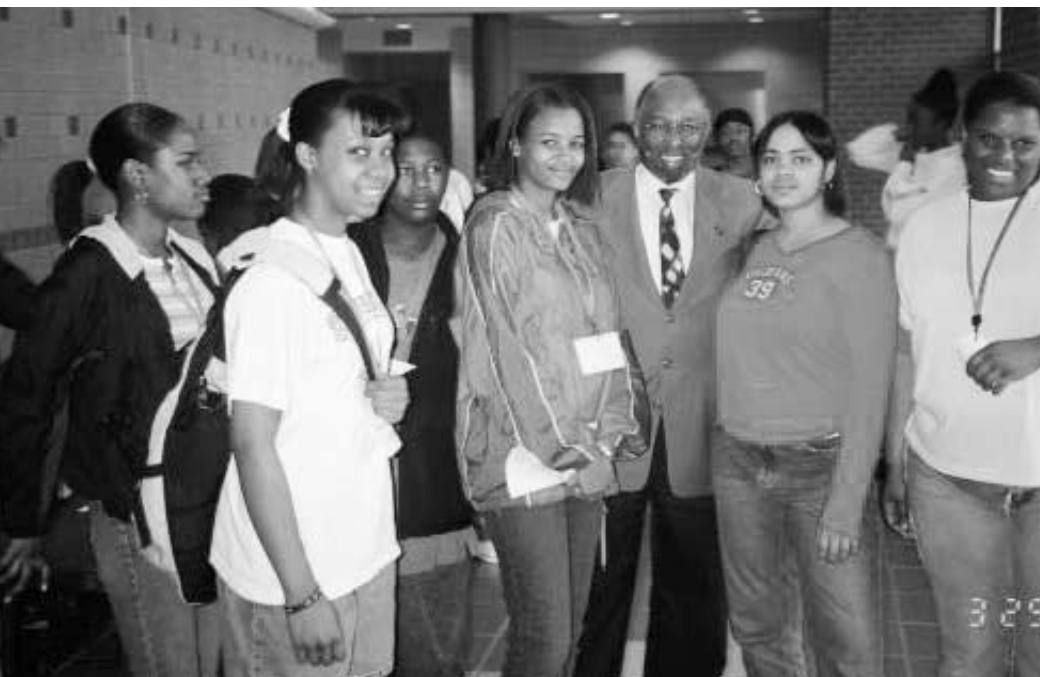
District representative Tony Carter, ROCAME President, coordinated volunteers from the District for the regional competition. Doug Greene, Jeff Whiting, and James Lewis helped out with the pentathlon event. The pentathlon consisted of 5 tests of physical skill followed by math and/or science questions. Other events included "Egg Drop", "PowerPoint Presentation", "Mystery Architecture", "Chemistry Clue", "Math Test" and a "Quiz Bowl".

The students came from Brunswick, Columbus, New Hanover and Pender counties, having been identified by teachers and school administrators as having aptitudes for math and science. Local industry representatives from Corning, General Electric and International Paper proctored and scored the events. Our local university; UNC-W furnished assistance with registration and conducted an event.

*\*For more information on ROCAME, please contact Tony Carter at (910) 251-4834.*



*Demetria Scott, daughter of Annie (Contracting), prepares to test her engineering skills by dropping a packaged egg.*



*NC Representative Thomas Wright addressed the ROCAME students. At left is Tamera Carter, daughter of Tony(PM), and the New Hanover County High School students.*

# District Team Celebrates Earth Day

A team from Wilmington Environmental Resources Section put together and manned a District Display in celebration of Earth Day, 27 April at Greenfield Lake. Chuck Wilson, Rosemary Cohen, Tara Williams, Jenny Owens, and Hugh Heine took part in the celebrations.

Thirty-five exhibitors took part in the festivities among the cypress trees under three large tents. The Wilmington District environmental display highlighted the Corps' involvement in protecting and repairing the environment and fostering stewardship.

Over 100 people spoke to the Wilmington District team and viewed the display. The team gave out posters, pencils, lake maps, and brochures. The event was sponsored by the Cape Fear River Watch.

– By Sherrie Storm

## Team Water Safety Rescues A Wet Azalea Festival

Rain did not dampen the enthusiasm and interest of the crowds at this year's Azalea Festival in downtown Wilmington April 4th, 5th and 6th. As always, the US Army Corps of Engineers' Water Safety display was a hit.

RG Absher, Assistant Operations Manager from W. Kerr Scott Lake in Wilkesboro, NC, his wife Donna, a volunteer, and Paula Carper, Operations Branch in Wilmington District Office worked the booth for the 3-day event.

"Donna Absher was such a wonderful addition to our booth," said Carper, the leader and coordinator for the Wilmington District Water Safety Team. "Her enthusiasm and knowledge of the lakes and water safety was outstanding and really added a great deal to our success."

The busiest day was Saturday, with over 500 people coming by the booth. Unlike some passive displays, the Water Safety Display is interactive and requires a lot of stamina for those who work it. The team speaks to each person that comes by about wearing their PFD (personal flotation device or life jacket), answering questions about recreating at the lake projects, and swearing in junior rangers.

"The swear-in is the most meaningful and fun part of the events that we do," said Carper. "Each child that comes by can be a Junior Safety Ranger if he or she takes a pledge that the team has developed."

The children raise their hands and repeat "I promise to always wear my life jacket when I go in a boat. I promise to always tell my parents where I am going. I prom-

ise to never, never swim alone. This way I will always be safe." They are then bestowed with the Golden Badge of Junior Safety Ranger.

Safety Sam, the remote controlled boat, is a favorite of kids and adults. Sam has been Wilmington's mascot at festivals, boat shows, parades, and state fairs. Safety Sam is so popular that visitors ask specifically about him.

The Team also hands out free "goodies" with safety slogans on them. One of these items is an orange whistle.

"One boy of about 12 came by to show us his whistle that he received last year," said Carper. "He went on to tell us that it saved his life when he fell into a swimming pool and nobody was looking. He had his whistle and managed to blow it until someone came to his aid."

Water Safety is serious business, but the Wilmington District has developed the program to present it in a most enjoyable way.

– By Sherrie Storm, Park Ranger



"Safety Sam", the District's remote-controlled boat, is always a hit at public events. The little boat can move, wink, and talk!

## Federal Women's Program Sponsors "Bring A Child To Work Day"

On April 24 nineteen children, ages 6 to 13, visited the Wilmington District Office for "Bring a Child to Work Day". The event was sponsored by the Federal Women's Program.

Ben Wood, Acting Deputy Director for Programs and Project Management welcomed the children. Immediately following the welcome and photos with Mr. Wood, the children toured the District Office.

The remainder of the morning's activities consisted of presentations by District Team members on a variety of subjects. These included aerial photography, sea turtles, wetlands, awesome artifacts, water safety, and the interesting work the Public Affairs Office does. The presenters did an excellent job of sharing information on careers that related to the topics discussed. The children indicated they learned a lot and had a great time! After the presentations, the children joined their parents or adult friends for a pizza picnic outside by the gazebo.

Thank you to all of you who made this event possible! Thank you to all employees who sponsored a child to bring to work.

The presenters deserve a special thank you. They were Beth Huffines, Richard Kimmel, Angie Pennock, Penny Schmitt, Doug Wall, Trudy Wilder, and Ben Wood. Thanks also go to Marti Sedgwick for taking photos and bringing donuts and juice; Doug Wall for helping lead one of the



*Penny Schmitt explains the hectic and worldly nature of Public Affairs to this group of children in her District office.*

tour groups; Rachel Thompson for coordinating the pizza picnic; and Jan Brodmerkel, Scott Brodmerkel, Larry Calame, Andre Jackson, James Lewis, Marti Sedgwick, and Rachel Thompson for helping with the picnic set up and clean up.

The Federal Women's Program is part of the EEO Program and the FWP Manager is a member of the EEO Committee. The FWP has its own, separate committee of men and women who are dedicated to providing educational opportunities for all employees and celebrating nationally recognized observances such as "Equality Day", "Breast Cancer Awareness Month", "Women's History Month", etc.

Your FWP Committee is Gena Boswell, Peggy Conner, Tom Corder, Oweita Freeman, Billie Jones, Susan Lane, Judie Poole, Elizabeth Porter, Richard Ryan, Penny Schmitt, Marti Sedgwick, Rose Sullivan, Joyce Taylor, Jory Triplett, and Mary Wells.

The committee meets once a month during lunch. If you wish to join the FWP Committee or if you have suggestions on programs or activities that you would like your FWP to sponsor, please contact Lisa Hetherman at (910) 251-4831.

*– By Lisa Hetherman, Project Manager*

# Reaching Out...

Kevin McDaniels (Kerr) and Mike Womack (Kerr) spoke to 100 members of the Buggs Island Striper Club in Henderson, NC on 28 March.

Iverson Ryland (Kerr) and Shannon Boyd (Kerr) gave Water Safety Program to 225 6th-8th graders at Henderson, NC Middle School on 9 April.

Carmen Boyette (Jordan) and John Rochevot (Jordan) presented a program on Water Quality to 240 6th graders at Jordan Lake State Forest on 29 April.

Paula Carper (Operations) and the Wilmington District Water Safety Team worked displays at Merlefest 24-27 April; Charlotte Boat Show, 5-9 Feb; Raleigh Boat Show; Greensboro Boat Show 16-19 Jan. Participants were Ed Snyder (Kerr-Scott), Sheila Stanley (Kerr-Scott), Sue Hicks (Philpott), Kevin Hughes (Kerr-Scott), RG Absher (Kerr-Scott), Steve Brown (Falls), Beth Huffines (Kerr), and Susan Traxel (Philpott).

Trudy Wilder (Environmental & Acting Dredge PM) spoke to the Cape Fear Garden Club on their 7th Annual Earth Day Cruise to Battery Island on 27 April. ("Battery Island" is a USACE, Section 204, and "Beneficial Uses of Dredged Material" project completed in 2000.)

Eric Alsmeyer (Raleigh Regulatory) presented programs to 75 maintenance staff and supervisors in NCDOT Divisions from Greensboro, Durham, and Winston-Salem on 3, 4, and 17 April. The program was on USACE permitting authority under Section 404 and the Corps' role in DOT projects.

Joyce Taylor (Kerr) and Clarence Conner (Kerr) helped host the 14th Annual NC-VA Ecology Meet at Kerr Reservoir 23 April.

Approximately 100 middle and high school students participated in the event.

Tyree Robertson (Kerr) and Roger Anderson (Kerr) presented water safety programs to 180 students at Bluestone Middle on 24 April; they presented the program to 200 students at Western Vance on 30 April.

Terry Brown (Hydrology) spoke to a group at the 30th Anniversary of the Cape Fear River Assembly at Brown's Summit, NC. The program was on the Corps' role in water management and the use of weekly stakeholders' meetings to foster better water use management.

John Roberts, II (Engineer Yard) led a group of Wilmington Citizens Academy on the Henrietta III river tour on 26 April.

Lillette Granade spoke to the Conservation and Environment Committee of Fayetteville, NC on storm water, wetlands, and erosion issues on 20 February and 6 May.

Marty Sedgwick (Logistics), Team Captain and the FWP sponsored a USACE Relay for Life Team for the American Cancer Society on 3-4 May. The Team was comprised of 25 District employees and their families. COL Ray Alexander and his family participated. The Team walked for 24 hours, and raised over \$2,000 for this worthy cause.

Larry Benjamin (Geotech) received a Certificate of Appreciation from "Girls Incorporated" on 21 Feb. for his after-work tutoring in math and sciences. Larry works with groups of 6 to 8 at a time. The young girls are currently making grades of B and C after previously failing.

Michael Hosey (Jordan) and Jenny Owens (Environmental Resources) presented a District Display at the "One NC Naturally Conservation Partnership" Conference in Raleigh on 16 April.



*COL Ray Alexander, daughter Jennifer, and son Sean*



*Martie Sedwick & the FWP's Relay for Life Team*

Rosemary Cohen, Liz Vallery and Scott Williams (Environmental Resources) spoke to 800 middle school students at Roland Grize Middle School on 15 and 16 April.

Michael Hosey presented 3 interpretive hikes to 46 people on Ospreys at the annual "Songbird Celebration" at Blue Jay Point County Park on 26 April.

Mike Large (Kerr) presented a water safety program to 30-3rd graders at DoD school on Post McNair at Fort Bragg with NC Wildlife Officer Terry Dixon on 17 April. Ranger Large also presented water safety program to 18 "Special Education" students in Warrenton, NC on 18 April.

Staff Sgt. Jason Alexander, son-in-law of Susan Traxel (Phup ott) was inducted into the Army's highly regarded Sergeant Audie Murphy Club, Feb.27. He received this honor after proven dedicated service, interviews with his company and brigade commanders, and two boards. The club, named in honor of the World War IT's most decorated soldier promotes good leadership.

Matt Lund, son of Steven Lund (Asheville Regulatory), recently was named to the Asheville Citizen-Times All-Western NC High School Swim Team for the 2pd year. Matt also received the 2003 Good Citizenship Award from the Asheville Civitan Club for volunteer service to the community through the Marine JROTC unit at Asheville High, where he is battalion commander.

Ryan Alexander, son of COL Ray Alexander, finishes his freshman "Rat" year at the Virginia Military Institute 16 May 03.

Rachel Alsmeycr, 12, daughter of Eric Als meyer (Raleigh Regulatory) achieved her 6th consecutive

Superior rating on her violin in the Federated Music Teachers Judging. She participated in the Triangle Youth Orchestra's Spring Concert as Assistant Principle, Second Violin.

Nancy Snipes Mosely, a graduate of UNC Chapel Hill, has been accepted into the Master Teaching Fellows program at Wake Forest University for the upcoming term. Nancy is the daughter of Frank Snipes (Planning Services Section).

William H. Trey" Roy, III, son of Sheila (IMO) and Lynn Jack (Coastal Engineering)

will be graduating from the University of TN-Knoxville on 10 May 03 with a BS in Sport Mgt. and a minor in Business Admin. He will work as an Assistant Golf Pro at Cherokee Golf Course in Knoxville, TN.

Janna Franklin, NCSU '01, is complementing her poultry science graduate research activities by teaching a new Agricultural Institute Spanish course. The class is for Ag.Inst. Students who will find it necessary in their future jobs to speak daily with



Staff Sgt. Jason Alexander (r)

Hispanics/Latinos. Ms~ Franklin is the daughter of David Franklin (Regulatory).

Shira Sattin, a senior at Laney High School, has won the Bank of America Scholarship to for study at UNC-Greensboro and abroad. Shira is the daughter of Bob Sattin (Navigati on).

Jacob Freeman, son of Tom Freeman (Falls) graduated Summa Cum Laude NCSU, December with a degree in Mechanical Engineering, and is currently enrolled in graduate school.

## Retiree News

From Bob Swart

**April:** There were 14 attending the meeting – Lloyd Tyndall, Doris and Ken Old, Bettye and Bob Swart, Dan Grimsley, Dorothy K. Everette, Augustus B. Moore, Jr., Lawrence Crawley, Max Grimes, Kay and Buddy Johnson, Rex and Sylvia Philips. Lawrence Crawley attended his 50th NHHS reunion in March; Rex and Sylvia's granddaughter, Lauren, won 2nd prize in the science fair at Noble School and was entered in the regional science fair at Murray High School; Betty Matzke's mother, Mrs. Bonnie Chadwick passed away 2 April. Our thoughts and prayers go out to them.

**March:** There were 14 attending the meeting – Joe Lewis, Bob Doetsch, Gloria and Paul Woodbury, Doris and Ken Old, Bettye and Bob Swart, Jean and Dan Grimsley, Dorothy K. Everette, Augustus B. Moore, Jr., Lawrence Crawley, and Max Grimes. Bob and Bettye Swart lost Bob's mother, Bessie Swart, 25 February. Mama was an occasional visitor to the retiree luncheon; Miss Sara Bradshaw passed away on 4 March. Sara worked with Ben Smith, Billy Narron, and Steve Aiken in Project Management in Engineering; Eric and Betty Matzke made a trip to Florida to meet with old high school friends.

**February:** There were 17 attending the meeting – Joe Lewis, Sylvia Phillips, Gloria and Paul Woodbury, Doris and Ken Old, Bettye and Bob Swart, Dan Grimsley, Dorothy K. Everette, Augustus B. Moore, Jr., Lawrence Crawley, Kay and Buddy Johnson, Charles Hollis. Gus Moore married Angela after more than 11 years of courting; Tammy Jarrett brought pictures of that pretty baby boy, and food could not be served until the pictures had been viewed.

**January:** There were 20 in attendance – Edith and Jim Vithalani, Max Grimes, Joe Lewis, Sylvia, Lauren, and Rex Phillips, Gloria and Paul Woodbury, Doris and Ken Old, Bettye and Bob Swart, Dan Grimsley, Bob Doetsch, Dorothy K. Everette. Very little activity was shared this month. I guess everybody is still getting over the Holiday season. Jim and Edith Vithalani will be leaving for their journey to India on 7 January. Edith will be there for 4 weeks; Jim will stay for 6-7 weeks. Bettye and Bob Swart made the trip to Florida, 17-20 December to attend son-in-law Paul Harris' commencement. Paul received his Masters from University of Miami. Paul is married to daughter Missy, and both were coming home for the holidays. Tammy Jarrett had a healthy baby boy on 16 December. Mother, baby, and Dad are doing fine. Paul Woodbury says the next semester at UNC-W will be his last. Our thoughts and prayers go out to Eric Matzke and his family on the death of his 102 year-old mother. Mrs. Gladys Matzke Chatt passed away on 30 December.

## Condolences...

Mr. Judge Henderson, retiree from John H. Kerr passed away on 3 May, at age 75. Judge worked at Kerr from 27 March 1957 until 16 April 1982. Our thoughts and prayers go with his widow Lucy, and his daughters Delores Bullock and Geraldine Yancy.



# Are You Ready for... Hurricane Season 2003?

"Preparation through education is less costly than learning through tragedy," according to Max Mayfield, Director of the National Hurricane Center.

Those of us who have lived in the Wilmington area for several years know first-hand the devastation that can be caused by a deadly hurricane, experiencing Hurricanes Bertha and Fran in 1996 and Dennis and Floyd in 1999. Knowing your vulnerability and having a plan of action can reduce the effects when disaster strikes.

Although the tropical storm activity the past few years has been above average, the coastal areas have been spared from serious damage. Therefore, folks tend to become complacent. **DON'T LET DOWN YOUR GUARD!**

President Bush declared May 18-24 National Hurricane Awareness Week, emphasizing the need to get our "ducks in a row" prior to hurricane season, which is June 1st through November 30th. To prepare Wilmington District TEAM members, CESAW District Circular 500-1-3, Hurricane Preparedness, is revised and distributed each year prior to June 1st. Everyone is urged to read this document and keep it handy for reference throughout hurricane season. Additional information is available in FEMA's publication, "ARE YOU READY? A Guide to Citizen Preparedness." Many of you have already picked up a copy from EM. If you have not, there are some more available.

The SAW Hurricane OPLAN was exercised May 19-22. This district plan contains checklists for staff members to ensure the safety of TEAM members, and to protect equipment and property, beginning with the pre-phase (peace-time monitoring) through Phase IIIB (12 hours after landfall). A "tabletop" hurricane exercise was conducted for

members of the Emergency Response and Recovery Office (ERRO) the morning of 22 May. The enthusiastic participation by attendees made the experience educational and interesting. The entire exercise proved to be a valuable tool for preparing the TEAM for hurricane response.

Overall, the District is in great shape to deal with whatever Hurricane Season sends our way. However, there is always room for improvement. If you have an idea or a question that starts with "I wonder why we don't...", you may e-mail your suggestion to "CESAW-EOC" in the district system. All comments are welcomed!

Hope you have a great summer and a safe Hurricane Season!

- Your EM TEAM



*Hurricane Fran caused extensive damage in 1996.*

## Corps Day 2003

Friday 13 June at Empie Park • 0830 – 1630

LUNCH: Adult \$7 • Kids 6-12, \$2 • Kids 5 & under FREE! • T-Shirts \$3 with Lunch, \$5 without Lunch

BBQ Pork, Fried Chicken & Fixin's & Corps Birthday Cake

For lunch tickets & T-shirts call Kirstie Stokes at (910) 251-4871 or Sharon Sutton at 251-4843